sion, and the number of architects having "vacancies" in their offices for articled pupils (and I fear me "*sub rosa*" in their pockets for the premiums), I cannot help exclaiming,

"What! will the line stretch out till the crack of doom?"

Surely things cannot be so very prosperous in the world architectural as to demand this constant increase in its future members, when we find architects in the same breath advertising for assistants who must possess almost all the qualifications for architects and artists too, at a remuneration of from thirty shillings to two pounds per week, or otherwise principals want to keep all the "loaves and fishes" to themselves.

To me, Mr. Editor, it appears that the profession is already *overstocked*: the late railway mania has been a powerful auxiliary in bringing this about. Every parent or guardian who had a son or ward he did not know what else to do with, articled him either to an architect or engineer, because he anticipated that there was "a good time coming" for that "sort of thing," and the result has been, is, and will continue to be, that there are numberless young men who have spent small fortunes in the study of their profession, either totally unoccupied, or compelled by dire necessity to accept such remuneration as a London mason or joiner would indignantly refuse; and why is this, Mr. Editor? Because the profession is overstocked. These "latter day" pupils appear before us of the *ancien régime* as Banquo's ghost did to Macbeth,

"And push us from our *stools*."

"Our pupils can do what we have to do, and we cannot afford to keep paid clerks," say some architects: and why, gentlemen. I would ask you, can you *not* afford to keep paid clerks? Because you take too many pupils, and for too short periods: and what is the after result? Why that those among them who happen to be born with "silver spoons" in their mouths commence practising (?) for themselves, and the patronage of these degenerate days (little though it be, God wot!) becomes distributed among so many, that there is not only scarce a crust left for us poor paid clerks, but the architect himself gets very indifferent cheese to his.

Under such circumstances, who can wonder at the present state of public competition? Pupils are but half educated, and consequently become only *half-bred* architects, possessing none of the finer feelings for the profession that should exist. Who can wonder, then, that they truckle to the call of some liberal-minded committeemen, who, in the fulness of their hearts, ostentatiously offer a paltry five or ten pounds to the *lucky* competitor who shall furnish them with a design for some public structure, whose cost will probably be some seven or eight thousand pounds?

"Oh! shame, where is thy blush?"

An Architect's Assistant.

Books.

Catalogue of the Library of the Institution of Civil Engineers. Corrected to December 31, 1850. London: Clowes and Sons. 1851.

The principles on which this catalogue is framed are somewhat novel. The plan which has been most generally adopted by scientific societies, is a classed catalogue, or one having a number of distinct sections, one for each important subject, having the authors alphabetically arranged in each section, thus forming a number of distinct catalogues. Another plan, sometimes followed, was to have two distinct catalogues, one of authors' names arranged alphabetically, and the other of subjects also alphabetically, in both cases the full titles of the works being given. The first plan involved great uncertainty and inconvenience, was anything but precise, and in almost all cases a universal alphabetical arrangement of the authors' names had eventually to be resorted to, and printed as an appendix, or index to the body of the work.

The Catalogue under consideration differs entirely from both of these. It is, in fact, a catalogue of names, and an index of matters, interpolated together into one universal alphabetical arrangement, so that that unity which is of such unquestionable convenience in a work of this kind, is preserved throughout. The principal entry is the author's name, under which head a complete transcript of the title page is given. The chief subject, or subjects, treated of, are then taken out, for the index of matters, and cross referenced to the different authors, so that all the authors on any particular subject may be seen at a glance, by simply referring to the subject entry.

The work has been executed by Mr. James Forrest, under the direction of Mr. Manbey, the secretary, and they have produced what cannot fail to be of service to the engineering student, who will find in this library most of the best works on his profession. It contains 3,000 volumes and 1,500 tracts, and we hope that this publication may lead to its further enrichment by the members and their friends.

The Hand-Book to the County Courts. By D. E. Colombine, Solicitor. Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. London, 1851.

Since the extension of County Court practice it has become much more necessary than before that the public generally should obtain a knowledge of the various proceedings to be adopted by plaintiffs and defendants. We have here, accordingly, the whole familiarly explained by a member of the Profession, whose name is very well known, and will doubtless itself constitute a recommendation to readers and to all who have the misfortune to have anything to do with law either as plaintiffs or defendants.

Miscellanea.

Space of Egyptian Monuments.—A correspondent of the *Athenæum*, speaking of the damage which is being done to the relics of old Egypt, says,—"It would be no easy task to collect in what way the spoliations are to be explained. In one place certainly we know the Turks have been at work,—in another, the antiquaries; but in others, it is quite a puzzle to think how so much destruction can have been performed without apparent notice of any kind. However, so it is:—and really, while there still remains something worth preserving, I cannot help suggesting that much of this is owing to the supineness of that very large class of persons who profess to take an interest in Egyptian antiquities. The proper plan, I think, would be, to direct whatever influence could be brought to bear to such a useful end to the formation of a committee, consisting of the principal consuls and residents in Egypt, charged with watching over the preservation of the monuments of the country, and supplied of course with funds to pay for guardians and inspectors. If such a committee were formed, with of course the sanction of the Government,—some considerable good might be done; and I believe there are many Europeans who would not be sorry to relieve the somewhat monotonous life of Egypt by rushing themselves busy on this subject. Some of them would be going up the country every year. They would be in communication with all travellers; and with ease to themselves—and surely profit to the world—would perform their self-imposed duty. It may be said—Why do they not spontaneously organise such a committee? The answer is,—because the courage required would be too great. One of the first things they would have to do, would be to interfere with travellers, who would go home and write books full of terrible denunciations against them. Yet it is obvious, that if we wish to make the natives respect the monuments, we must begin by respecting them ourselves. If we undertake to prevent the Arabs from drawing quaint boats and caricatures on the walls, for example, of the tomb of Beni Hasseu, we must interdict celebrated engineers and others from covering half a ceiling with their names in gigantic letters scrawled with a tar-brush, and deny ourselves the pleasure of meeting the record of the presence of a pleasant practical member of Parliament in a modern mis-shapen cartouche on the columns of Carnac. Again, how can we, with any chance of being attended to, forbid the Turk to demolish a propylon for the purpose of making powder-works, if we cannot prevent other barbarians from smashing a whole chamber in order to carry off a historical record which derives its whole value and authenticity from its existence in that chamber? To save the monuments of Egypt at this time of day, it is necessary to surround them with a kind of superstitious respect; and this cannot be done by a body which has not the sanction of the whole corps of *savans* in Europe, and the support of the European governments.

Furniture in the Old Time.—It was not usual, in the Middle Ages, to possess much furniture, for in those times of insecurity, any thing movable, which could not easily be concealed, was never safe from plunderers. Benches, on which several persons could sit together, and a stool or a chair for a guest of mere consideration, were the only seats. A bed was a usual article of furniture in the bower or chamber; though there were, no doubt, in large mansions, chambers set apart as bedrooms, as well as chambers in which there was no bed, or in which a bed could be made for the occasion. The bed seems usually to have consisted merely of a sack filled with straw, and laid on a bench or board. Hence words used commonly to signify the bed itself were "bench," and "straw;" and even in King Alfred's translation of Bede, the statement, "he ordered to prepare a bed for him," is expressed in Anglo-Saxon literally by, "he ordered to prepare straw for him." All, in fact, that had to be done when a bed was wanted, was to take the bed-sack out of the *cyst*, or chest, fill it with fresh straw, and lay it on the bench. In ordinary houses it is probable that the bench for the bed was placed in a recess at the side of the room, in the manner we still see in Scotland.—*Art Journal.*

Opening the International Exhibition.—We rejoice to hear that the opening of the Great Exhibition is to be one worthy of the unparalleled occasion. Her Majesty is to open the Exhibition in State on May-day at mid-day, in the midst of anthems and music, trumpets, cannon, and other display of a formal and official as well as imposing order. Prince Albert, the presiding genius of international union and peace, will, at the head of the Royal Commission, read a brief report of proceedings to her Majesty while seated in a chair of state to the north of the transept centre, and a procession will afterwards parade the aisles to the sound of martial music—no longer in the devil's service, but in that of the Prince of Peace, and played by the great organs of the Exhibition.——The attention of the proper authorities ought to be given to the neglected state of the Park in the immediate vicinity of the building. Several correspondents have taken the present opportunity of complaining to us of the state of things there, and we are glad to see that the *Times* has also drawn attention to it.

Novelty in Letter-Press Printing.—Among the various designs recently got up in Edinburgh for the Great Exhibition, we may mention a curious specimen of typography, executed by Mr. Robert Ramsay (of the *North British Advertiser* office). It represents a front view of the Free Church College, and is executed so as to have the appearance of an engraving or woodcut. It is composed entirely of moveable types, amounting in number to upwards of twelve thousand five hundred, independent of upwards of eighty feet of brass rule.

Peel Monument for Preston.—Mr. Duckett's model of a statue has been approved of by the committee, with liberty to the artist to alter the portrait as he may see fit after visiting the International Exhibition, where numerous busts of Sir Robert, it is said, will be exhibited. The model of a pedestal, by the same artist was also selected, and a great block of limestone has been bespoken. The site has been fixed at the end of Cross-street.

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